

Representative Skip Priest

2006 Pre-Session Report and Survey



Friends and neighbors,

The 2006 Legislative session begins on January 9. Once again, I am pleased to have the opportunity to represent you in Olympia.

This year will be a short, fast-paced session of 60 days which means a lot of work will be done in a brief amount of time. As I write this letter, I expect the Legislature to consider taking actions on a number of issues important to our communities:

The Supplemental Budget

The good news is that Washington's economic indicators point to a budget surplus of about \$1.4 billion in our state this year. The bad news is that there are already a large number of interest groups lined up at the Capitol with hands outstretched. With a \$450 million budget deficit currently projected for the next budget cycle, we can't repeat the fiscal mistakes made by prior legislatures. I believe it's imperative that we return to a fiscally sound approach to developing this year's supplemental budget and that we finally commit ourselves to establishing an effective rainy day fund.

This will require us to focus our spending on critical needs rather than a first come-first served approach. This should mean increased monies in areas such as education funding (ie. providing additional dollars to local school districts to fund WASL remediation programs, to fund special education programs and to help offset skyrocketing transportation costs) and for our state's growing unfunded pension system. Failure to take this type of thoughtful approach will inevitably lead us into the same vicious cycle experienced in past years—more taxes but fewer relative dollars directed to our state's most important priorities.

Growing the economy and creating jobs

As an author of the plan that landed the 787 production here in Puget Sound, I'm delighted to read about the turnaround now being experienced by Boeing and many of our other large companies in the region. This bodes well for our area's continuing economic recovery. But make no mistake; the promising reports from Boeing hide the fact that many of our small businesses in the 30th District and around the state continue to struggle to survive.

I believe Washington can truly move forward only if we energize our state's largest employer – the small business sector. This will require us to reform our workers' compensation system, reinstate the unemployment reforms rolled back last year and create a more attractive place for new businesses to locate. Stimulating growth of the small business sector is critical to creating the family wage jobs needed to support families in our communities.

Education, "Jessica's Law" and other issues will be debated

While jobs and the economy are vital to our district, many other issues will be debated that affect our communities and families. Education will be at the forefront including the development of appropriate alternatives to the WASL. In addition, I'm hopeful that the Legislature will pass a "Jessica's Law" so that we can better protect our kids from sex predators and pass auto theft legislation that will also help make our neighborhoods safer. I'm also hopeful that we'll finally begin addressing the issue of our out of control health care costs that are having such a crippling effect on all of us. These are, of course, just a few of the subjects to be discussed. I will try to keep you updated as the session progresses.

In the meantime, thank you for allowing me to be your voice in the Legislature. I look forward to your feedback and input on these and other issues.

Sincerely,

Skip Priest

State Representative - 30th District



Representative *Skip Priest*

Representative Skip Priest

30th District

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1-800-562-6000

Hearing-Impaired Hotline:

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Penalties for Auto Theft Must be Addressed

Whether at the grocery store, out door belling or at community meetings, I have heard from you that addressing auto theft is one of your top priorities. That's why I will introduce tough legislation dealing with auto theft this legislative session. During the interim, I have been working with the King County Police Chief's Auto Theft Task Force, chaired by Federal Way Chief Anne Kirkpatrick, to make sure this legislation effectively addresses the critical issues of auto theft and its collateral crimes.

Today, auto theft is reaching epidemic proportions. Last year alone, we had a 61.5 percent increase in auto theft in our state. A staggering 132 cars are stolen each day—one every 11 minutes—giving Washington the dubious distinction of having the fifth highest rate of auto theft in the nation.

And auto theft is not just about joy-riding or inconveniencing the car owner. Auto theft most often affects those who can least afford it—many times threatening family security and livelihoods. It also has an even greater darker side than its immediate effect on our families. The evidence is clear that auto theft is also a crime associated with both identity theft and methamphetamine production and distribution.

Letting repeat offenders of auto theft walk free is not only about the next car that will be stolen; it's about the myriad of crimes that are committed as a result or in addition to car theft. These crimes are happening in our community; the place where we most need to be safe and secure.

Until the Legislature passes laws that effectively address this issue, we will continue to see auto theft and its companion crimes around our neighborhoods grow. It's time for the legislature to pass clear and tough legislation to curb auto thieves' appetite for committing this crime. It's time we began to treat auto thieves, well, like the thieves that they are.

To prevent your car from being stolen:

1. Keep your registration card in your wallet instead of your glove compartment.
2. Use paint or an indelible marker to put the vehicle identification number (VIN) under the engine hood and trunk lid and on the battery. This number is usually found on the dashboard on the driver's side of the car.
3. If you have to leave personal property in your car, leave it in the trunk.
4. Keep your car in a garage and lock the garage door.
5. Use a security device like a steering wheel lock or a gear shift column lock.
6. Do not leave your car idling while unattended.

The time is now to address the WASL and equivalent alternatives

The class of 2008 will be the first graduating class required to pass the reading, writing and math portions of the Washington Assessment for Student Learning (WASL) to receive their diploma. It is obviously an issue of great importance to students, parents, and teachers in our community and our school district.

This session the Legislature will also approve alternatives to the WASL—equivalent ways for some students who haven't passed the WASL to achieve their diploma. As a newly appointed member of the House Education Committee, it is a subject on which I will spend a great deal of time.

Specifically, I plan to continue my leadership in developing an equivalent alternative in the area of career and technical education. Last year, the Governor signed my HB 1987 which was the first step in achieving this goal. I'm confident that working with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction we can develop an approach that maintains the high standards we seek for all our students while also providing additional fairness and flexibility.

As always, your comments and suggestions about the WASL and possible alternatives will be both welcome and timely.

30th District Survey

Your priorities

1) Please rank the following list in order of your personal priority. Please prioritize by indicating 1 as the most important. Feel free to add additional items under the "other" option.

	Voter 1											Voter 2										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A) Economy and jobs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B) Energy costs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C) Environmental regulation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D) Health Care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E) Higher Education.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F) K-12 Education.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G) Law Enforcement, corrections and prisons...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H) Property rights	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I) Social Services.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
J) Taxes/Government spending	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
K) Transportation.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

State Budget/Taxes

2) In the 2005 Legislature the existing, voter-passed I-601 state tax and spending limitations were repealed with a simple majority vote. Do you support a constitutional amendment that would require a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate to raise state taxes and exceed a fixed spending limit?

	Voter 1	Voter 2
Yes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

K-12 Budget Funding Priority

3) Would you support or oppose a proposal that would require Washington school districts to spend at least 65 percent of their current education operating budgets in the classroom?

	Voter 1	Voter 2
Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Oppose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4) There is a debate among parents, students and the Legislature on whether or not the WASL should be administered as is or if WASL alternative equivalent tests should be offered in addition to the standard WASL? Do you support students taking a WASL equivalent alternative test in lieu of the WASL?

	Voter 1	Voter 2
Yes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Health Care

5) Washington state is facing a health care crisis. Each year, businesses that offer employees health care coverage see their premiums rise in double digits which has caused employers to have more employee cost-sharing of premiums and/or drop employee health care coverage altogether. Have you or your family had to contribute more to an employer-sponsored health care plan or has your employer had to drop your company health care plan altogether?

	Voter 1	Voter 2
Yes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6) With the escalation of health insurance premiums by double digits every year, the debate on what state government should do about the issue has heated up. What should be the state government's role in health care?

a) Government should provide health care to all citizens, regardless of income... ☐ ☐

b) Government should make it easier for businesses to provide health care for their employees..... ☐ ☐

c) Government's role is to provide health care only for those in poverty who cannot afford their own coverage.... ☐ ☐

d) Government has no role to play in health care ☐ ☐

Property Rights

7) If there was an initiative on the ballot or legislation proposed today requiring the state or local government to pay a property owner if a government action damages the value or use of their property, would you support or oppose the initiative and/or legislation?


	Voter 1	Voter 2
Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Oppose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Voting/Elections

8) In light of the 2004 election issues at polling locations, many counties have considered a switch to mail-only voting which would eliminate in-person polling locations in the county. Do you favor or oppose vote-by-mail-only elections?

	Voter 1	Voter 2
Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Oppose	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

INSTRUCTIONS: To help with tabulation, please record your responses by shading the entire circle of your answer using a blue or black pen. Please record any additional comments in the area provided on the back page. Thank you for providing me your valuable feedback.

Shade entire circle like this: 

Not like this:  or this: 

Mailing: After completing the survey, fold to expose return address panel, affix 39¢ stamp and mail.

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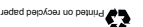
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PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

[illegible]

Thank you for filling out this brief survey. Your input is vital to making sure your voice is heard in Olympia. I personally review every survey that is returned so that I have your feedback on hand as it is needed. Due to election law restrictions, however, I am unable to send you survey results or information without your consent. If you would like a confirmation that your survey was received and get the results, please check the box below, fill in your full mailing address and your email address.

☐ Yes! I want to know that my comments were received and have the results of the survey mailed to me. My return address is:

e-mail: _____



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